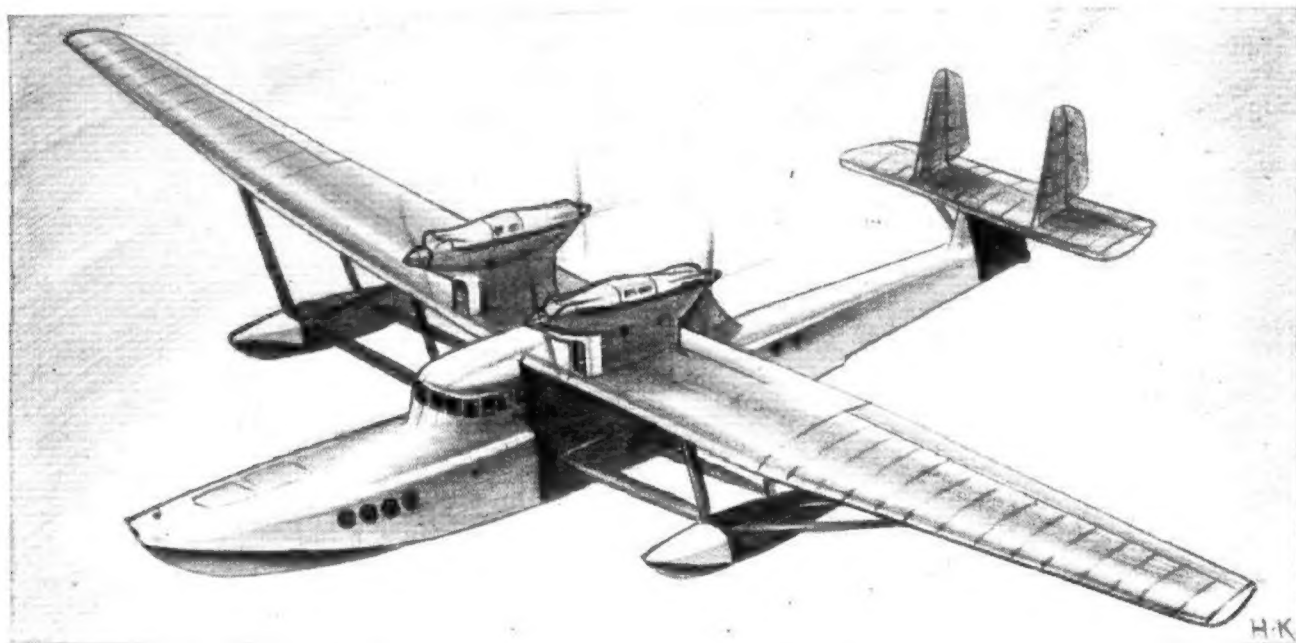


COMMERCIAL AVIATION

— AIRLINES — AIRPORTS —



THE TRANSATLANTIC LOIRE. This *Flight* sketch gives some idea of the appearance of the Loire 102 flying boat being built for the French South Atlantic service. It should be flying by April and is being fitted with four Hispano series X twelve-cylinder water-cooled engines of approximately 700 h.p. each. The cruising speed should be close to 165 m.p.h. with four passengers, 1,430 lb. of mail and fuel for a range of 2,640 miles.

THE WEEK AT CROYDON

Two Promotions and a Return : A Fine Gesture : The Homing Balloon : Rainmakers

IN these days when there is a shortage of pilots of the captain class on most of the big European air lines it is good to hear of promotions from the rank of acting-captain to that of captain. Last week Imperial Airways announced two such promotions for Messrs. Holmes and Wilkins.

Amongst those who have not been seen at Croydon for some time is Capt. Armstrong, of Imperials, one of the oldest civil air pilots. He returned just before Christmas (as a mere passenger!) on the I.A. service from the East. He it was who opened up the line Penang to Hong-Kong, which will eventually be an important link in Empire air routes.

That extremely active and mentally youthful lady, Miss M. E. Brook, whose age, she says, is nobody's business but her own, recently returned from her trip to Nairobi by Imperials. She left Croydon on the African mail with exact punctuality, and arrived the other day at Croydon only one minute late. She had an excellent trip, nobody being anything but perfectly fit and well either while going out or coming back, which shows how very much we have advanced in the matter of air sickness. Presently air sickness may be altogether eliminated, but *mal de mer*, it would seem, is little less prevalent than it was around the time of the Spanish Armada and all that. Miss Brook's next trip, she says, will be to Cape Town.

That enterprising ex-member of the Croydon fraternity, Man Mohan Singh, has just performed a feat which proves to the world that he is the fine fellow his friends at Croydon always knew him to be, and which has been both generous and kindly as well as being of great use to civil aviation. After he left Croydon on August 12 in an attempt on the Cape record, he reached Khartoum ahead of schedule, but bad luck overtook him, and he finally

wrote off his Gull when taking off from Luwingo, Northern Rhodesia. Later, he bought a Puss Moth at Elizabethville, flew it back to Luwingo, and from there made leisurely progress to Cape Town, stopping at many places on the way to give free joy rides to kiddies, both Indian and European. A Durban paper remarks that Singh and his two Indian companions have done what no European pilots have yet done (in that part of the world anyway), and brought to 1,500 children their greatest moment.

Something to Remember

"No doubt," says the newspaper, "the airmen were officially thanked, but the really imperishable thanks subsist in the remembering hearts of hosts of little ones to whom airmen and planes will long be a waking dream too glorious to be released from the clutched grasp of recollection." That is well said. Croydon probably feels the same, but, being British and "largely inarticulate," merely remarks "Good show, Singh!" and collapses, abashed at its own verbosity.

At about the time a Spatted Eagle escaped from some zoo or other, the instrument-bearing balloon, now used by the Croydon weather wizards for taking the temperature, humidity, and what not during fog, also made a bid for freedom. There is no truth in the rumour that some confused but convivial gentleman, aware of both escapes, rang up the Croydon Met. Office after dinner one evening to say that "your Spatted Baboon is perching on our front garden shrub." As a matter of fact, the balloon, apparently fitted with a homing device, did better than the eagle, for it finally came to rest practically outside the palatial front door of the chief met. officer's private residence.

Met. people have an unhappy time during periods of